

GRADE 6: MAKING MEANING

Considerations for Curriculum Development

Sixth Grade Contextual Theme: Western Hemisphere Studies

North America, Central America, South America – Aztec, Incan, Mayan and North American Native Civilizations, Age of Exploration and Colonization to 1754.

Assumptions and Goals of Curriculum Development

The focus of grade 6 will build upon students' prior contextual knowledge about the United States to include a larger geographical area, the Western Hemisphere. Students will develop an understanding of ancient world history of the Western Hemisphere through 1754, while applying the disciplinary core concepts of civic mindedness, economic decision making, geographical reasoning and historical thinking through multiple perspectives and viewpoints. This grade will expose students to the rich diversity of life in a variety of country settings through careful comparisons. Furthermore, students will develop critical thinking skills around the political, economic, geographic and historical similarities and differences of the regions in the Western Hemisphere. Throughout grade 6, students should continue to be afforded ample opportunities to engage in all Practices of the Inquiry Cycle.

Summative grade level compelling questions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Who were the early people of the Americas?

How did the development of countries in the Western Hemisphere compare to that of the United States?

What makes the Western Hemisphere unique?

How has the landscape of the Western Hemisphere changed as people have adapted to and modified it?

Contextual Inquiries by Disciplinary Core Concept

Civic Mindedness

How were the governments of these countries formed to reflect the needs of their citizens?

How did power struggles between countries impact people?

How do the structures of these countries function to support civil order?

How do the constitutions, rules and laws of other countries compare to the United States?

What were the purposes of early government?

Who determines what is best for these countries' citizens?

Economic Decision Making

How did people earn a living?

How do the economic systems of these countries compare to the United States?

Who makes economic decisions in these countries and who is impacted by these decisions?

How did scarcity impact the economic development of these countries?

What is the impact of innovation on exploration?

How did mercantilism impact the economy?

What resources are available in these countries?

What are the economic relationships of countries in this part of the world?

Geographical Reasoning

What information can we learn about these countries using maps?

What are the physical characteristics of countries in the Western Hemisphere?

How have places and regions changed over time?

How have groups of people influenced the cultural diversity of places and regions in these countries?

What are push and pull factors among these countries?

What led to the exploration of new water and land routes?

How have human actions modified the physical environments of these countries?

How did the early people of the Western Hemisphere adapt to their environment?

What effects did European colonization have on the people in this region?

Historical Thinking

How could key events in the history of these countries be categorized into different time periods?

Why did early explorers and settlers come to the Americas?

Why would people living in these countries view the same event from different perspectives?

How can historical sources be used to determine significant contributions to the development of these countries?

How can we use historical sources to evaluate the importance of historical figures in these countries?

How have individuals and groups contributed to the development of these countries?

What are the connections and exchanges among the people of these countries?

What is the relationship between exploration and the development of these countries?

How has cultural diversity changed over time in these countries?

What are some shared and similar turning points in history in the Western Hemisphere?

What are the historical contributions of countries in the Western Hemisphere?

Civic Mindedness

6.CM.1 Civic and Political Institutions *Explain how government affects the functioning of citizens, political and economic groups within society.*

6.CM.2 Participation and Deliberation: Applying Civic Virtues and Democratic Principles *Explain how personal interests, civic virtues, and democratic principles influence decisions.*

6.CM.3 Processes, Rules and Laws *Examine and explain the procedures for making civic decisions based on the needs of society.*

Key Idea: The type of government determines how citizens, political groups and economic groups function within a society.

Students who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following compelling questions:

How do governments function within society?
Are rules and laws the same in different places?
How do citizens interact with their government?

Students who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following supporting questions:

What are the rights, responsibilities and duties of citizens under different forms of governments?
What are the differences between rules and laws?
Who decides what is best for society?

Fundamental Understandings:

Students will understand the following:

- Governments affect how citizens function in their daily lives.
- Citizens may have different rights, responsibilities and roles under different forms of governments.
- The needs of society influence creating rules and laws.

Key Concepts:

May include, but are not limited to the following: citizens' roles, civic decisions, civic virtues, collaboration, compromise, cooperation, democratic principles, equality, forms of governments, general welfare, justice, laws, liberty, participation and engagement, philanthropy, political leaders, purposes of government, responsibilities, rights, rules, social contract, sources of power in government, state of nature, types of democracies, types of economic markets, types of economic systems, voting, etc.

Economic Decision Making

6.EDM.4 Economic Decision Making *Explain how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals and society.*

6.EDM.5 Exchange and Markets *Explain how changes in supply and demand, resource availability and production can be used to study economic markets.*

6.EDM.6 National Economy *Explain the influence of resource types and availability on economic development.*

6.EDM.7 Global Economy *Explain barriers to trade and how those barriers influence trade among nations.*

Key Idea: Economic decisions have a causal effect on many facets of society.

Students who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following compelling questions:

Who benefits from economic decisions?

What is the relationship between economic markets and supply and demand?

How does the availability of resources affect the economy?

Why would governments impose barriers to trade?

Students who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following supporting questions:

What are economic decisions?

What are different types of economic markets?

What resources are available in a country?

What are barriers to trade?

Fundamental Understandings:

Students will understand the following:

- Economic decisions have a positive/negative impact on individuals and society.
- Supply and demand affects the cost of goods and services and influences the production of goods and services.
- The availability of resources within a country impacts development.
- Trade plays a role in a global economy.

Key Concepts:

May include, but not limited to the following: competition, conflict, consumption, cost of labor, distribution, economic decisions, economic markets, economic systems, embargos, factors of production, goods and services, human made disasters, import/exports, incentives, interdependence, loaning money, money, natural made disasters, negotiation, opportunity costs, production, productivity, sanctions, savings, scarcity, specialization, supply and demand, tariffs, technology, trade, transportation, types of resources, wages, war, etc.

Geographical Reasoning

6.GR.8 Spatial Views of the World *Explain spatial patterns between places and regions and their corresponding cultural and environmental characteristics using geographical representations.*

6.GR.9 Human-Environment Interaction *Explain how the physical and human characteristics of places and regions are connected to human identities and cultures.*

6.GR.10 Human Populations Spatial Patterns and Movements *Explain how transportation and communication technology influence spatial connections among human settlement and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.*

6.GR.11 Global Interconnections *Analyze the ways cultural and environmental characteristics vary among the regions of the world.*

Key Idea: Cultural and environmental factors determine the various regions of the world.

Students who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following compelling questions:

How do spatial patterns uncover certain phenomena?
How are places and regions impacted by humans?
How do resources influence where and how we live?
How does culture and the environment characterize the world?

Students who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following supporting questions:

What can we learn about places and regions by studying their cultural and environmental characteristics?
What is the purpose of studying different maps?
How is diffusion related to human settlement?
What are the various regions of the Western Hemisphere?

Fundamental Understandings:

Students will understand the following:

- The environment affects cultures.
- Places and regions have human and physical characteristics.
- Movement influences the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.
- Regionalism affects culture.

Key Concepts:

May include, but not limited to the following: adaptations, climate, communication, competition, compromise, conflict, cultural practices, diffusion, directions, elements of culture, geographic representations, human activities, human characteristics, human-environment interactions, human-made disasters, immigration, language, migration, modifications, natural disasters, natural resources, opinions, patterns of settlement, perspectives, physical features, places, points of view, regionalism,

regions, relative and absolute location, religion, resolution, social institutions, social structures, spatial patterns, technology, transportation, etc.

Historical Thinking

6.HT.12 Chronological Reasoning: Causation and Continuity *Analyze connections among historical developments and events in order to classify them as examples of change or continuity.*

6.HT.13 Historical Understanding: Contextualization and Perspectives *Analyze primary and secondary sources to explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.*

6.HT.14 Historical Arguments *Create an argument about the past that is supported by possible evidence generated from historical sources.*

6.HT.15 Interpretation and Synthesis *Classify the kinds of historical sources used in a secondary interpretation and analyze them to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.*

Key Idea: Historical sources allow people to not only examine changes in the perspectives of people over time, but provide insight about historical events and developments.

Students who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following compelling questions:

How can past events impact the future?
Why would someone's perspective change?
How can historical sources support an argument?
Why should we evaluate historical sources?

Students who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following supporting questions:

How do primary and secondary sources shape our understanding of past and present events?
How do perspectives vary the reporting of events?
How do you determine which argument is valid?
How do you determine a document's limitations?

Fundamental Understandings:

Students will understand the following:

- The past is a series of interconnected events.
- Perspectives may vary in different sources as a result of historical contexts.
- Arguments can be supported by evidence from primary and secondary sources.
- An author's perspective might limit the value of a source.

Key Concepts:

May include, but not limited to the following: argument, bias, cause and effect, change, civilizations, close reading, contextualization, continuity, corroboration, credibility, cultural influences, evidence, historical developments, historical events, limitations, origin, perspectives, politics, primary source, purpose, relationships, secondary source, socio-economic factors, sourcing, technology, validity, value, etc.

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